



Superfund Update Upper Clark Fork Operable Unit

Current Status:

The park awaits concurrence between MT DEQ and EPA on a Remediation Action/Restoration Plan that then sequences and defines the specific cleanup efforts on the Clark Fork River between Warm Springs Ponds and Garrison. The park is right in the middle of this reach and has 3 miles, both sides of river frontage. WASO NRDP leadership is evaluating the current delay to determine if legal action is warranted.

Summer 2011, the park will engage the state's contractors to conduct sampling on site to prepare for design/engineering. Park acres to be removed and treated in situ vary depending on which sampling process is favored with a range from 8- 53 acres. Once begun, the clean up and restoration process is expected to last 2 summer seasons, with visitor services disrupted in the 3 mile river corridor within the park anticipated for 2013-2014.

Background:

Negotiations for a financial settlement (a Consent Decree) from BP/ARCO **concluded in February 2008** with the State receiving \$168 million for remediation of the Upper Clark Fork River Basin. **The park received a separate settlement of \$4.4 million, \$775,000 of that reserved for** restoration activities that will meet the standards (ARARS) defined by the Park Service Organic Act. Restoration will follow the State-led Remediation effort on the Park, with EPA oversight and substantial NPS involvement

The Record Of Decision (ROD) for the Clark Fork River Operable Unit of the Superfund Site located in western Montana, was released **May 4th, 2004** completing more than 10 years of work by NPS Superintendents, DOI solicitors, NPS Intermountain Region Leadership and park staff, to establish a path for clean up of the river system within the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

The ROD sets up a 10-15 year process of river clean up and restoration. Language crafted for the ROD is precedent setting for the National Park Service because it uses the National Park Service Organic Act and the park's legislation, to create highly specific performance standards. The standards are intended to re-establish the ranch's historic landscape and remove hazardous metals.

The hazardous substances include arsenic, copper cadmium, lead and zinc released from upstream mining and smelting activities in Butte and Anaconda and deposited during a 200 year flood event in 1908.



"Slickens", in the park's riparian zone, will be removed, clean soil replaced and areas planted with native plant materials, according to ROD performance standards, affecting approximately 26-53 acres

A Human Health and Safety Plan (HaSP) was completed for the park June 2004 that indicates that toxicity through casual and brief exposure to soils and water in the river corridor is not as

serious a threat as first suggested. The HaSP outlines a protocol for medical base monitoring of employees, which the park is following. Visitors, staff and livestock are using the park safely.

With recent EPA support for mercury research, and elevated levels in the Clark Fork River suspected from mining pollutants, a 2005 PMIS statement for \$86,000 was prepared to begin critical research on this pollutant in the waters and soils of the ranch. A 3 year study of Osprey fledglings is in its 2nd year, with disturbing results. Young birds in park nests have 10 times more the amount of mercury in their bloodstream than healthy adults, more than EPA considers allowable for normal function. If this research concludes a pollution source connected to the ARCO tailings, the park may have grounds to reopen the claim.

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